AN

ADDRESS

TO THE

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF FRANCE;

CONTAINING

STRICTURES ON Mr. BURKE's

REFLECTIONS

ON THE

REVOLUTION IN FRANCE.

What ſome centuries ago it was daring but to think, and dangerous to expreſs, is now realized, and carried into effect. Syſtems are analyſed into their firſt principles, and principles are fairly purſued to their legitimate conſequences.

CAMBRIDGE,

Printed by J. ARCHDEACON Printer to the UNIVERSITY;

And ſold by W. H. LUNN, Cambridge; and by J. DEIGHTON, No. 274, Holborn, London.

MDCCXC.

Where may be had,

The ART of pronouncing the FRENCH LANGUAGE with PROPRIETY, by the ſame AUTHOR.

If in the following pages any inaccuracies in the language occur to my Engliſh readers, let them remember they are written by a Frenchman.

GENTLEMEN,

LIVING among the firſt aſſertors of liberty, and enjoying with them the bleſſings it diffuſes upon men, ſhall I be permitted to expreſs publickly my utmoſt veneration for the reſtorers of the too long invaded rights of men; to congratulate my countrymen on their ſharing with this country the true happineſs of being free, and place, under the eyes of an hoſpitable and benevolent nation, the out-lines of the dreadful evils which your wiſdom has removed from the Gallic Shore.

Witneſs their approbation of the illuſtrious aſſembly, who, in an age wherein virtue was forced to yield to tyranny, and corruption of manners, had courage enough to ſhew themſelves worthy of the appellation of her deareſt votaries, it is in vain that reaſon and prudence unite to convince me of my want of requiſite talents to tranſmit to the Demoſthenes' of the time the publick homage ſo juſtly paid to their undaunted patriotiſm. The irreſiſtible impulſe of gratitude bids defiance to the truth of their friendly admonition, and, with a becoming diffidence, I lay before the ſaviours of my

country, the expreſſion of that delightful ſentiment engraved in adamant in the heart of every true Frenchman.

The World has ſeen, with no leſs ſurpriſe than wonder, France ſhake off the yoke of Deſpotiſm. A revolution of ſo great concern to mankind, and which, likely, will new model the whole ſyſtem of Europe, was ſo much the leſs to be expected to take place, that, the apparent levity of the French under their ſufferings, their long habit of paſſive obedience, and, what is more, the never altered principle with the government, to keep in a continual ſtate of indigence the moſt numerous part of the nation, ſeemed to be the foretellers of the everlaſting reign of arbitrary power. It was, indeed, with ſo much reaſon to be thought impoſſible for them to repel the too burdenſome hand of oppreſſion, that the illegitimate conſequences of their degrading ſlavery, by their daily increaſe, had thrown the French into a ſilent deſpair, and apparently deprived them of the means of attempting, with any well grounded hope of ſucceſs, the recovery of their long loſt liberty.

Such was the deſponding ſtate of my countrymen, though not altogether ſo inſufferable as it had been for ages, before it pleaſed the always beneficent Being to inſpire a ſelect claſs of men with the ſpirit of true philoſophy.

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Theſe precurſors of pure light, to fulfil their heavenly miſſion among their fellow creatures, had been indefatigable in their endeavours to diſſipate the miſt which hindered men from perceiving its ſplendour, and had ſucceeded ſo far as, in ſpite of the iron rod of perſecution, to make ſome of them worthy of that appellation. But, the genius of philoſophy, naturally ſlow in its progreſs, could but become ſtill more ſo, when attacked on all ſides with the always unſheathed ſword of prejudice and ſuperſtition.

France was ſtill involved in both. Inhabited by a ſimple and harmleſs people, but credulous to an exceſs, it preſented a vaſt field to the reſtleſs ſpirit, and cunning ſhifts of Prieſtcraft. This monſtrous offspring of ſordid ambition, when driven away from among our more generally enlightened neighbours, had, under the ſacred appearance of religion, taken refuge under our remaining roofs of ancient ignorance. There, for ages, its votaries had not left a ſtone unturned that could forward their chief aims, *power*, *riches*, and pleaſures. Armed with the *now* powerleſs thunderbolt of an impiouſly aſſumed heavenly power, and diſplaying the flying colours, on which the words SUBMIT BLINDLY, OR HELL WILL BE YOUR SHARE, were conſpicuouſly written, they anathematized thoſe whoſe philanthropy endeavoured to reſcue the minds of men from the narrow

bounds in which their pious frauds had confined them.

In ſhort, every thing appeared to coaleſce to hinder the French from obtaining the fulfilling of a wiſh they hardly dared to form.

Our Kings, born in the midſt of a court, which under the reign of Lewis the fourteenth became the ſeat of luxury, pomp and grandeur; brought up in an almoſt Aſiatic effeminacy, and, through habit, too much taken up with a ſeries of pleaſures artfully contrived to keep them from troubleſome inquiries, could but ſeldom, if ever, give up their enticing allurements to fulfil the firſt duty of Kings, that of ſeeking the cauſe of the evils preying on their ſubjects, as well as on the vital parts of their own power.

Men, in whatſoever ſituation in life *chance* may have cauſed them to be born, have received from nature the ſame foibles and the ſame paſſions. The effects produced by theſe innate motions of the ſoul, may, indeed, greatly differ, and be attended by a leſſer or greater degree of danger, according to the ſtation the ſame chance has aſſigned to us in this world. In kings they become of the moſt dreadful kind, if, enjoying an uncontrouled power, and being almoſt worſhipped by a mild and forgiving people, they are prone to indulge the former, and never try to ſubdue the latter, which, unfortunately,

nately, was too often the caſe with our late monarchs.

Theſe characteriſtics of human frailties might, indeed, have been palliated, or perhaps removed by the bleſſings of an education entirely different from that beſtowed upon them. A happy choice of inſtructors could have inſured a ſucceſs, ſo much the more to be wiſhed for, that, from it, depended the happineſs of millions of individuals committed, by the ſupreme Being, to their fatherly protection. But, an object of ſo great moment for the nation, could not be obtained at a court, where vile intrigue, and ſelf-intereſt had forced the *Fenelons* of the age to hide themſelves among the numerous croud of their oppreſſed countrymen, and the dangerous influence of female power, had, under the patronage, and with the ſanction of unprincipled favourites, erected its throne near that of the Sovereign.

This, however incredible it may appear, was, in ſpite of the Salick law, the ſtate of a government from whom continually iſſued favours or puniſhments, through the channel of a hundred little paſſions, or ungrounded and unjuſt prepoſſeſſions. Such a truth once eſtabliſhed, it will not appear ſurpriſing, that a junto, void of all the virtues which ought to have been the active attributes of the part they preſumed to act, could err in the choice of thoſe under

whoſe tuition the hopes of the people was to be placed.

It is but a dictate of plain reaſon, that abilities adequate to the taſk of improving the natural good diſpoſitions of youth, and of nipping in the bud thoſe of a different turn, which nature might, by miſtake, have implanted in their hearts, are the firſt requiſites in every inſtructor. But, that of a Prince muſt add, beſides a deep ſtudy of books, a thorough knowledge of the world. He muſt have a *Princely Soul*, the abode of all manly virtues; his heart, inacceſſible to vice, muſt be void of thoſe paſſions which he muſt have learned to pity and bear in others, and his mind, the calm and orderly dwelling of that ſound learning which is free from pedantry, muſt be prepared to impart the well digeſted inſtructions, which, with the help of a progreſſive experience may form — A MAN.

Individuals ſo truly calculated to give *a new life* to the heir to the crown, could but little attract the eyes of a coalition, who, actuated by oppoſite principles, had the greateſt intereſt in propagating the wretched creed of their ſtill more wretched practiſes. Men, on the contrary, in whom were to be found the ſame ungovernable ambition, and motive faculties coherent with their own, unvariably became the objects of their ſelf-intereſted patronage.

Theſe,

Theſe, to ſhew themſelves true to the truſt repoſed in them, by their vicious or wrongly directed precepts, and unmanly compliance with the ſecret views of their patrons, as unvariably oppoſed the motherly deſigns of nature, and, ſhamefully deaf to the whiſperings of the always beneficent Monitor of mankind, betrayed honor, probity, and even the dictates of their own conſcience.

Such was the ſtate of our court, and ſuch were the leaders who had aſſumed the power of appointing men to the ſtation of inſtructing Princes in the difficult art of reigning, and the practice of virtues that could alone make them happy. Had they been only wanting in that experience, which nothing but the deepeſt ſtudy of *men* and *things* can give, they could have been juſtly compared with an inſtructor on whom the following lines were lately written,

D'un Prince orner l'eſprit, en lui formant le cœur,
Lui tracer les chemins qui ménent au bonheur,
Rectifier, régler, étendre ſes idées,
Et toujours vers le vrai diriger ſes penſées,
Lui monſtrer les devoirs que lui preſcrit ſon rang,
Ne peut être le fort d'un orgueilleux pédant:
Pour tout homme, en un mot, c'eſt œuvre difficile,
S'il ne connoit à fond et la cœur, et la ville,
Et ne joint aux vertus qui ſont l'homme de bien,
L'âme du philoſophe, et le cœur du chrétien;
S'il ne poſſéde enfin cet art vaſte et ſublime,
Qui, ſeul, du cœur humain ſait parcourir l'abîme
Au Prince infortuné, *le pauvre homme* eſt hélas!
Céque le *bon* Perez fut jadis à Gil Blas.

Engliſhed thus:

To inform the mind and heart of a Prince, to ſhew him the way to happineſs; to rectify, regulate, and give a proper extent to his ideas, direct his thoughts towards the truth, and, point to him the duties incumbent on his high ſtation, cannot be the lot of a preſumptuous pedant; and, indeed, the difficulties attending ſuch an undertaking are unconquerable, if his inſtructor do not unite, to the thorough knowledge of the world, thoſe virtues which characteriſe an honeſt man, the ſoul of a philoſopher, and the heart of a chriſtian; in ſhort, if he be not maſter of that great and ſublime art, which alone can enable him to explore the intricate path of the human heart, the poor man, alas! is not better calculated for the attempt, than Perez of old was to inſtruct Gil Blas in claſſical learning.

But, the privation of ſuch requiſite qualifications in the inſtructors of our Princes, was not the only defect which made them unworthy of the confidence repoſed in them. They, beſides, either through fear or ambition, being generally as careful not to deviate from the eſtabliſhed precepts of their *deſerving* patrons, as they were unwilling to incur their ill will, or to expoſe themſelves to the effects of their wrath, their inſtructions could but have a deep taint of the principles which produced them.

It then naturally followed, that far from giving to their pupils a juſt idea of the power with which they were one day to be intruſted, and perſuading their mind that their future authority would be the gift of a people, whoſe truſt it was the firſt duty of a good king to reward with the moſt faithful and fatherly cares of their intereſt, property and welfare, they, on the contrary, miſleading their underſtanding, and improving on the innate propenſity of men to overrule, neglected nothing to imbibe in their hearts the dangerous principles on which their political creed was eſtabliſhed. Therefore, reducing them into practice, their unremitted and too ſucceſsful cares were employed in convincing the unfortunate victims of their too lofty ambition, that a king, being far above the laws, may with the greateſt propriety look upon them, and his ſubjects' fortune and honour, as ſubſervient to his caprices, will, or pleaſures, and, even, as the means intended by Providence to promote a happineſs they were bound to procure him at any rate.

This, and what I have ſaid before, were the main branches of the obnoxious tree, which for a long ſeries of years wrapt France up in the darkneſs of its deſtructive ſhade; but, to leave off metaphor, and expoſe plain facts, they were the chief cauſes of the gradual degeneracy of our conſtitution, and the ſources of

our

our daily increaſing misfortunes, as will ſoon appear.

Among the innumerable evils ſpread by the hand of an hermaphrodite government, one, and not the leſs corroding of the already too much bent ſinews of the State, reſted with an almoſt always corrupted adminiſtration.

It is a known fact, that, at a court where intrigue, adulation, and deceit are the only means of gaining influence, they ſoon turn into an habit of the moſt winning kind. There, thoſe who are willing to acquire any degree of conſideration, intereſt, or power, as ſoon affected by that ſpirit, readily breathe, with delight, the contagious air which is productive of theſe grand characteriſtics of male and female courtiers. No where they, ever, appeared in a more conſpicuous light than at the French court. The throne, ſurrounded by nobles whoſe ſtately merit was too often confined to the length of an oſtentatious liſt of anceſtors, and whoſe only remains of the illuſtrious ſtock from whom they ſprung, was a name they ſhameleſsly diſgraced, preſented the unfortunate monarch in the ſituation of a wealthy man who, at his entry upon his eſtates, is cloſely beſieged by people whoſe aim is to deprive him of his wealth, integrity, peace, and morals.

Such, we may ſay, were the generality of our nobles,

nobles. Void of the manly virtues which ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed their progenitors, and betraying their duty towards their Kings, they, not only, endeavoured to perſuade their minds that they were beloved by a people, whom, though labouring under the height of miſery, they repreſented as living in eaſe and even affluence, and always as able as they were ready to ſupport the wiſe meaſures of their glorious reign, but, adding the hideous vice of diſſimulation to an inſincerity ſo obnoxious to the future repoſe of their benefactors, their jealouſies, animoſities and hatreds, among themſelves, were inceſſantly contriving the deſtruction of the hand they ſhook with all the ſhew of Friendſhip.

Thus our monarchs, made a prey to the moſt unnatural impoſture; kept remote from their ſubjects; buried in the pleaſures and pomp of their court; always the objects of the vileſt adulation; their friends either removed from them, or ſilent through fear, were left expoſed to the inſidious deſigns of nobles, who, ſlighting the inſtigations of humanity, and inacceſſible to the ſting of remorſe, made it their firſt care to hinder them from ſuſpecting that their miſtaken happineſs was the ſource from which our tears continually flowed.

Daily experience proves that, in courtiers, the watchful eye of lofty ambition is never at reſt.

reſt. Ours had the greateſt intereſt not to deviate from this courtly accompliſhment. Their unpardonable deſire of thwarting the deſigns of their not more upright oppoſers, or that of obtaining from the elevation of their creatures the means of ſatisfying the numberleſs wants of a depraved heart, ſtill increaſing that diſgraceful concern, rendered them cloſe obſervers of the failings of their deceived maſters, that they might, by improving on their prepoſſeſſions or weakneſſes, make them give their ſanction to their unprincipled views, and, thus artfully miſled them in the choice of their, as well as our real tyrants, — MINISTERS.

From thence iſſued that rapid and pernicious ſucceſſion of ſtateſmen, who, raiſed by the craftineſs of a party, whoſe deſtructive principles were engraved in their hearts, could but become the *worthy* ſupporters of the enemies to a conſtitution which was ſo far degenerated, that it hardly deſerved that appellation.

The care of ſtate affairs, unhappily, and too often, lies heavy upon kings. Their propenſity for thoſe earthly enjoyments they can ſo eaſily procure, and their natural diſguſt for the toils of government, ſkilfully inſtilled in them from their infancy, making them the more ready to free themſelves from the burden, they willingly laid it upon their miniſters. Theſe, in their turn, laying part of the load on hire-

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lings, if the head be vicious, the whole, of courſe, become a maſs of depravity.

This, which, indeed, was the caſe with the coaleſced bodies of our ſubaltern tyrants and their tools, preſented, at all times, a full view of the dangers attending an adminiſtration, not cloſely watched by the head of the ſupreme authority, as, the two former having, in their reſpective provinces, the ſame inordinate deſire of acquiring riches, are, generally, equally free from ſcruples, in their choice of the means which can forward the obtaining of their aim.

France, *perhaps*, experienced it more than any other country. There, miniſters, ſub-miniſters, and all the long liſt of their obnoxious et cæteras, bound by the ties of united intereſt; having the ſame objects in view; acting like uniſon ſtrings, which when one is touched the other moves by conſent; always countenanced by the influence of female aſcendency, and, ſure to baffle the feeble efforts of the few upright men they ſuffered to remain at court, daily added a new weight to the already too heavy fetters of their countrymen.

It was but natural, for a *junto* imbrued with the ſame principles, and actuated by the ſame ſpirit as their predeceſſors, not only, to adopt their deſtructive meaſures, but, even, it became for them of the greateſt moment to alleviate their miſdemeanors, as the former ſecured their

actual

actual welfare, and, on the latter depended their ſelf preſervation, in caſe of an unforeſeen diſmiſſion. But, a third motive, not leſs urgent, and the moſt prevailing with men determined to make a fortune at any rate, was the precarioufneſs of their ſituation, which, naturally giving riſe to the fear of being circumſcribed by the time the duration of their patron's favour would allow them to obtain their wiſhes, compelled them, as it were, either to follow the already eſtabliſhed plan of thoſe they ſucceeded, or, too often improve it into new expedients, more to the purpoſe of completing their deſigns, and our ruin.

Earneſtly enticed by thoſe incitements, and their native inclinations; being as indifferent to reproaches, as they were void of feelings, and giving full ſcope to their unruly deſires, France, the field of their depredation, became the ſeat of calamities and deſpondence. Her allayed monarchy gradually degenerating, offered no more but a monſtrous compound of anarchiſm at court, and the moſt inſufferable acts of tyranny in the provinces. An unbounded power overloading the moſt induſtrious and uſeful claſs of the community with all the weight of the moſt chargeable and ill contrived taxes, not only deprived them of the means of affording help, in the moſt preſſing wants of the ſtate, but, purpoſely reduced them

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to that degree of paſſiveneſs, which is the ſureſt deſtroyer of ſpirits, dignity of mind, and loftineſs of ſentiment. In ſhort, the revenues plundered by ſycophants, the people kept in a continual fear of ſeeing wreſted from them the ſcanty remains of their properties; ſurrounded with ſpies, and, therefore reduced to the deplorable neceſſity of miſtruſting neighbours, friends and relations; poor, helpleſs, and overwhelmed in a continual ſeries of corroding cares, are but the out-lines of the numberleſs evils in which the iron rod of oppreſſion involved the too paſſive ſubjects of too paſſive kings.

Individuals bleſſed with the leaſt ſhare of that liberality of mind, which is one of the characteriſtics of a citizen of the world, a philoſopher, and *a man*, will, undoubtedly, allow that theſe imperfect ſketches of our ſufferings, would want no other colouring to prove a ſufficient excuſe for my compatriots late ſucceſsful attempt; but, as it is, beſides, my deſign to leave no ground for the unjuſt and illiberal charge of inconſiſtence, laid againſt them, and, moreover, to convince of want of generoſity, thoſe who, miſlead either by a wrong information, airy notions, or national prejudice, have unmanly railed at the French and their leaders, I beg leave to add a few ſhades to my unadulterated picture. They will, I hope, preſent the

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eye of enlightened impartiality with the whole *enſemble* of thoſe unlawful and tyrannical acts of power, which not only begot the already related diſaſters of an injured nation, but reduced them to the grievous neceſſity of challenging the too oppreſſive hand of a deliberated deſpotiſm.

Among the moſt barbarous and forcible ones made uſe of, by our unmerciful and vindictive miniſters, to maintain the raſh power of the moſt corrupted adminiſtrations, that of the blackeſt hue, and which bordered the moſt upon tyranny, was the diabolical and hundred-edged weapon called LETTRE DE CACHET *.

This never failing means of ſatisfying revenge, indulging hatreds, protecting injuſtice, acquiring wealth, and baffling the wiſe deſigns of human laws, was depoſited in the hands of the moſt hard hearted of our ſtateſmen, and, by him diſpoſed of, either to gratify a darling paſſion, indulge a favourite, gain a new dependant, make himſelf agreeable to a proſtitute, or, what

* It might naturally be expected that I ſhould give here the origin and primitive uſe of the *lettres de cachet*, but as more able pens have fully treated of that ſubject, and may eaſily be referred to §, I will keep within the bounds I have preſcribed to myſelf, and only ſay, that they proceeded from one of thoſe deep encroachments, which pave the way to others of greater moment, and towards which unſurveyed miniſters are ſo much inclined. The firſt Edict which determined the abitrary uſe of the *lettres de cachet*, is that iſſued in July, 1705, and regiſtered in the parliament of Paris on the 20th of January, 1706.

§ See a poſthumous work, intitled, *des lettres de cachet, et des priſons d'etat*; volume the firſt.

what will, perhaps, appear to be a fable, this inſtrument of our ſorrows, was, too often, and by the higheſt bidder, obtained through the paltry intereſt of a valet de chambre of the demigod, and even by that of a third couſin of one of his kept miſtreſſes. To be ſhort, it was an unavoidable evil, continually impendent over every individual, which, like electrical clouds ready to burſt over the heads of terrified travellers, kept the whole nation in that awe, which enervates the faculties of the ſoul, and would, as it were, make death a welcome viſitor.

Poſterity will hardly believe, that, among chriſtians, men of an analogical diſpoſition with the principle of ſuch an act of inhumanity, could be found, but their ſurpriſe will ſtill increaſe, if they be told, that not only numberleſs hands ſtood open to receive the diſgraceful depoſit of the deadly weapon, but, even, that the choice of a *fortunate* truſtee, always imbued the hearts of the diſappointed pretenders with the venom of exaſperated hatred, againſt the ſucceſsful poſſeſſor of the too well exerciſed power of diſtreſſing his fellow-creatures.

Men daring enough to accept of ſuch a truſt, could but ſhew themſelves very indifferent about the means of filling up their truſteeſhip. The moſt ſpeedy to forward the accompliſhment of their wiſhes, and calculated to the meridian of

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their principles, as the moſt coinciding with their natural diſpoſitions, always had a *juſt* preference with them. Therefore, it will not appear ſurpriſing, if the innumerable body called *police*, formerly leſs numerous; and eſtabliſhed for better purpoſes, but ſince become a ſafe refuge for the outcaſts of mankind, for men inured to crimes, and void of common feelings, proved the ſtrongeſt column on which reſted their unlawful authority. Theſe *worthy* ſervants of ſuch *worthy* maſters, diſperſed among every claſs of the community, had, under the diſguiſe of Gentlemen, valets, footmen, &c. &c. &c. their poſts aſſigned to them in private houſes, places of publick reſort, and indeed in every part of the city. They were ſtrictly enjoined to liſten attentively to every diſcourſe, either on politics or morals, and then make their report to thoſe appointed to keep regiſters, wherein all which had been ſaid concerning the ſtate or the church, and chiefly the miniſters, was carefully entered with the name, and place of abode, of the deliverer of the unguarded, though, too often, innocent words, which were, and perhaps for ever, to make the imprudent ſpeaker, his friends and family the true objects of deſerved pity.

O! generous Engliſhmen; you! who, bleſſed with the beſt of conſtitutions, and protected by the moſt equitable laws, ſecurely enjoy the fruits

fruits of your forefathers' wiſdom; you! for whom the inſurmountable barrier erected by the hands of prudence and juſtice between you and the encroachments of power, is the truſty pledge of a ſober independance; you, in fine, whoſe liberal hoſpitality nobly tender a peaceable aſylum to every object of perſecution, could not diſapprove the efforts, made by your competitors in virtues and glory, to free themſelves from the painfnl and humiliating ſtate of being continually expoſed to be deprived of that right of man neareſt to your hearts, their invaluable Liberty. No! brave Britons, our faults, if we have committed any, are your own work, and you are bound, as it were, to juſtify them; you ſet us the example, we are but your imitators, and we glory in it: we then cannot, rationally, be apprehenſive of a diſapprobation, which would prove a check on your anceſtors, and a manifeſt ſign of your diſſatisfaction of their heroic endeavours to procure you your preſent happineſs. However, if the whole of my doctrine on this ſubject, be not entirely conformable to yours, ſuffer me to remain in a pleaſing error, which naturally ariſes from the knowledge that my long reſidence among you has made me acquire of the juſtice, greatneſs of ſoul, and exalted notions, which render the true Engliſhman a model of uprightneſs, beneficence and manly courage

for the moſt poliſhed nations in Europe. But, hurried away by my feelings, and yielding, with pleaſure, to the dictates of my heart, I forget that I am going from the proceſs of the ſubject which is to ſet our conduct in its proper light, and enable the uſual impartiality of a free people, to form a juſt idea of the indiſpenſable needfulneſs of alleviating the exaſperating hardſhips, under which we were inceſſantly groaning; but, let them read and judge.

The underlings of the police have already been introduced to my readers. They have ſeen their crews ſcattered abroad to ſpread unhappineſs, and part of their daily employment has been expounded. But I have ſtill to mention, that each of the myrmidons having a fixed ſtation aſſigned to them, according to the degree of their wile and judgment, very few houſes, where men or women ſervants were kept, could be free from their intruſion, and thus, no tranſactions in families, which they could come at, were a ſecret from the police. Others, appointed in every ward, to viſit the lodging houſes, and take down the names of the lodgers, &c. were, by ſecret practices, to come to the knowledge of their condition in life, proceedings, acquaintances, and the ſubject of their coming to the metropolis, &c. This was not all, a number of ſetters, choſen among people of every profeſſion, and in the pay of the police, were, in their dif-

different ways, ſet over the actions, words, and behaviour of natives or foreigners, from the Duke to the Cobler, and from the Ducheſs to the Rag-woman.

Their inquiries were too ſkilfully made to be unſucceſsful. An account of their obſervations was, daily, and oftener, if the caſe required it, carried to the lieutenant-general of the police, who, in his turn, tranſmitted it to the miniſter. This, too often a little great man, being, ſeemingly, too much taken up with the ſtate affairs, or, rather unwilling to examine into the particulars of the report, ſlightly liſtening to their information, left the buſineſs to be ſettled by his firſt ſatellite. He, on his ſide, as unwilling as his oracle, to beſtow his precious time on ſtrict inquiries, which were only to determine the lot of *men*, and ſtored with the implements of miſery, ordered, without any diſquiſitions, the parties accuſed to be ſeized, and removed into the darkneſs of a ſtate priſon, to increaſe the number of the unfortunate victims of the moſt illegal power. There, inacceſſible to any other human beings, but thoſe who had only their outward appearance, they were delivered up to the whole train of excruciating thoughts, whilſt thoſe who were the moſt tenderly concerned in their preſervation, unacquainted with their lot, were lamenting the loſs of a huſband, father, brother, or lover.

However unwarrantable and odious this may appear, it, nevertheleſs, is but one of the lighteſt mezzotintos in the unfiniſhed picture of thoſe acts of tyranny which overwhelmed France in a ſeries of diſquiets, conſternation, and the bittereſt tears. Witneſs the dreadful effects they had on my countrymen; their remembrance makes me ſtill ſhudder, and would, as it were, deprive me of the power of adding deeper ſhades, if I were not irreſiſtibly carried on with all my affections in fulfilling my promiſe. But, I muſt, again, beg leave to go, for a moment, from my ſubject, to throw upon it that light which alone can make me plainly underſtood.

It is an admitted maxim, that man's paſſions are never inactive, even in the breaſt of the true philoſopher; and he, as well as the reſt of mankind, would be expoſed to the dreadful effects of their inroads, if he had not acquired, by degrees, the power of ſtopping them in their fiery career. But, it is alſo an inconteſtable, as well as a too much evinced truth, that if a miſſed or teemleſs education have deprived us of the ineſtimable advantage of regulating them by the meridian of an inſtructor's conſummate experience, in ſhort, if our reaſoning faculties have been left to the entire guidance of unimproved nature, theſe motions of the ſoul become ungovernable, and their raging impetuoſity, too often,

often, carries us beyond the bounds of ſocial virtues, and may even make us break the moſt ſacred ties of conſanguinity. Education, that all in all for men, often and unhappily, as erroneous in its principles, as the numberleſs ſyſtems of the earth, and as much miſtaken and neglected in France, as it is among ſome of her neighbours, left the generality of the people unguarded againſt the impulſive influence of theſe tyrants of the human heart. There, however painful it be for me to mention it, too many individuals, unmindful of acquiring the means of quelling their unbridled deſires, and incited by the facility of indulging them, carried their propenſity to crimes to a degree of inhumanity unheard of, even among ſavages. There, unfortunately, it was not uncommon to ſee ſons or daughters, actuated by the unnatural ambition of appropiating to themſelves a fortune, which, in their opinion, was too long enjoyed by their too indulgent parents, make uſe of the melancholy appendix of old age, their declining ſtrength of mind, or improve on any conſpicuous miſtake in their behaviour, and ſolicit an almoſt never denied LETTRE DE CACHET, to confine them for life, on the falſe pretence of inſanity, or that of a miſconduct which threatened the whole family with an impending ruin. In fine, the readineſs, illuſtrated hereafter, with which the helliſh invention

was granted, becoming a powerful incentive to the completion of the wiſhes of hardened ſouls, overthrowed the manners, encouraged vice, and even deſtroyed thoſe ſentiments of gratitude, affection or love, which nature has imprinted in every heart, and ſo conſpicuouſly in thoſe of dumb-creatures.

Thus, and by the ſame means, a troubleſome huſband or an unpleaſant wife, could eaſily get rid of one another; an inhuman mother, jealous of the growing beauty of her daughter, or who, prompted by an inſufferable pride, could not approve of the object in whom ſhe centered her affection, could, ſoon, ſhut her up in a convent: a kept protected miſtreſs could, without the leaſt trouble, free herſelf from the impertinent, although juſt and well meaning advice of a father, brother, relation, or a too ſincere friend; and, indeed, nothing could afford a ſhelter againſt the deadly blows of the illicit weapon, placed in the hands of injuſtice, but the wretched and deſperate after-game of flying from one's country, friends, relations, and all that is deareſt to men. But let us return to the main point.

The reader will undoubtedly remember, that I have before pointed at the various kinds of individuals by whoſe intereſt a LETTRE DE CACHET could be obtained; but, the infamous practices made uſe of by the abettors, as well

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as their tools to drive a trade of it, remaining to be unfolded, I will endeavour to give an idea of the maſterly feats, which proved them to have placed their higheſt happineſs in the barbarian-like employment of tormenting men.

Of all the ſtrangers who came to the capital on purpoſe to obtain a wiſhed for LETTRE DE CACHET, ſome had no patrons; others were unacquainted with the means of procuring the dear object of their aim; and a third claſs, too ſenſible, perhaps, of the injuſtice of the action they were going to commit, uncertain what to do, and ignorant of the help that was at hand, took time to conſider if they were to give up, or purſue their point. They were not long ſuffered to remain in their anxiety. The members of the *uſeful* body, mentioned above, true to their duty, and anxious to increaſe the perquiſites of their infamous *manœuvres*, not only, were the informers of police, but alſo the agents of the craftily deſigning procurers. A ſure intelligence of the motives which brought ſtrangers to Paris, was, as I have ſaid before, ſoon acquired by the ſpies ſet about them. Theſe looſing no time, it was immediately carried to the dealers in the ſought commodity, and proper meaſures were taken to anticipate, in ſome manner, the wiſhes of the former, and ſettle with them an advantageous bargain for the partners in iniquity.

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This grand point being once obtained, and the booty divided, the remorſeleſs parties concerned, worſe than cannibals, lived on the fruits of the tears their raſhneſs had cauſed to be ſhed, whilſt the woeful objects offered up in ſacrifice to their inſatiable thirſt after wealth, ſeized, confined, and not knowing if they ſhould ever be reſtored to the world, were in that ſtate of deſpondence which borders upon deſpair.

Among the innumerable inſtances of the boldeſt acts of an unpardonable deſpotiſm, I have been a witneſs to; I will only ſelect a few, to give the reader a faint idea of the raſhneſs of that uſurped power to which we have endeavoured to ſet proper and lawful bounds.

Between the years ſixty and eighty, the Attorney-general of one of our moſt diſtinguiſhed parliaments, a man of a good genius, a faithful ſubject, and a worthy magiſtrate, found means to be introduced to one of the King's miſtreſſes. This woman, as beautiful as ſhe was unacquainted with the world, and chiefly with the court, had been preſented to his majeſty by the Marchioneſs of P--p-dour, as a proper object of amuſement for his heart, whilſt ſhe would keep to herſelf the whole management of his mind. The lawyer imagining to ſee in the natural diſpoſitions of the former an allay of honeſty and ambition, which, if ſkilfully tutored, could,

could, not only ſerve for the upright purpoſe of revealing by degrees, to the monarch the daring acts of violence offered in his name to his unhappy ſubjects, and even the crimes perpetrated by his favourites, under the cover of his pretended ſanction *, but alſo promote her and his own elevation, he propoſed his plan; it was aſſented to, and he undertook her inſtruction. Unfortunately for both, he being obliged, on account of the duties incumbent on his office, to live at a diſtance from court, they were reduced to the neceſſity of an epiſtolary intercourſe, which proved the ruin of their deareſt hopes. The watchful eye of unlimited ambition being never at reſt, as I have ſaid before, their correſpondence was diſcovered. Their letters were intercepted by thoſe intereſted in her remaining unacquainted with the means of leſſening a power, to which they had ſacrificed every thing deareſt to all the world, an obdurate ſinner excepted. Provided with this teſtimony of a pretended guilt, they gave a full ſcope to their revenge, and incenſing the mind of the King againſt the unwelcome inſtructor, he was immediately

* At the time I here mention, every thing was ſold at court, and always to the higheſt bidder. Moreover, oftentimes money was received from two or more pretenders to the ſame office, but never returned to the unſucceſsful candidates. If they complained, they were ſoon put in mind that there was ſuch a thing as a *lettre de cachet*, and when that could not ſilence them, the ſolitude and darkneſs of a dungeon afforded them an opportunity of clamouring freely againſt whom they pleaſed.

diately arreſted, and carried to the moſt dreadful of all the ſtate priſons. There, like too many others, he could have been privately put to death, if the impriſonment of a man of his importance had not been too public, to adopt ſuch violent meaſures. But, as the true ſpirit of revenge is never at a loſs, motives for an impeachment were contrived againſt him, and a committee, compoſed of men entirely devoted to his bittereſt enemies, was appointed to paſs ſentence upon him *. The unlawful proceedings had been ſo ſpeedily carried on, that he was within a hair's breadth of being condemned to die, when, by a kind of miracle, the particulars of which are, underneath, introduced in a note †, the proofs of his innocence being laid before

* Miniſters never forgive; this reſpectable and reſpected magiſtrate had oppoſed their doctrine as far as to ſay and then publiſh §, *that*, "*he is a ſlave who has not the undiſturbed enjoyment of his property: the higheſt degree of ſlavery and the moſt degrading to which deſpotiſm can reduce mankind, is to deprive men of their liberty by forcible and illegal proceedings.*" Many members of that committee are ſtill alive, and one of them enjoys in England, the fruits of the repeated acts of injuſtice, which may *perhaps* be placed on the account of his unbounded ambition.

§ In his *compte rendu des conſtitutions des jeſuites*, a work that will be immortal.

† One day when the King was gone a hunting, the Duke of Ch[illegible]ſ, one of his attendants, had purpoſely carried in his pocket a defence written for the unfortunate magiſtrate. He was far from daring to preſent it to his Majeſty, but, making uſe of an innocent and well meaning ſtratagem, he retired into one of the paths through which he knew the King would paſs, and holding in his hands the inſtrument of juſtification, he affected to be earneſtly taken up with the reading of it. In that ſituation he was found by the King, whom he no ſooner ſaw, than he ſhewed

before the King, he, yielding to the impulſes of the beſt of hearts, immediately ſent orders to put a ſtop to the unjuſt proſecution.

Another, and a ſtill more cruel example of oppreſſion, was that of a young gentleman, whoſe too earneſt patriotiſm not permitting him to conſider of the times, circumſtances, and how inſignificant could be his influence over the Prime Miniſter, wrote to him an anonymous letter, wherein he reproached him with ſome forcible and illegal meaſures. The fact was but too true, but plain truth being always an unwelcome viſitor among thoſe whom our littleneſs makes us call great, the petty-tyrant incenſed at the author of ſuch an upardonable liberty, *generouſly* impeached the unknown adviſer before the tribunal of ſelf-revenge. His innumerable ſetters ſoon diſcovered the object of his wrath; he was unlawfully arreſted, carried to a dungeon, where a doſe of poiſon was adminiſtered to him. Either by a defect in the

ſhewed a pretended deſire of concealing from him, what he heartily wiſhed to place in his hands. The aſtoniſhed Monarch, putting on a frowning countenance, aſked him why he was ſo anxious of hiding the object he ſeemed to be ſo intent upon. The Duke appearing confuſed; begged to be excuſed ſaying what it was, but the King earneſtly inſiſting on ſeeing it, the ſubtle courtier gave him the memorial ſaying, Sire, this is the moſt compleat juſtification of one of your beſt ſubjects, whom his enemies ſeem to have devoted to an ignominious death, his life is at ſtake, Sire, he is innocent, and dares to implore your Majeſty's juſtice. The King took the papers, put them in his pocket, returned immediately to Verſailles, read them, and a meſſenger ſoon ſet out with the order which ſaved the life of the unguilty priſoner.

the quality, or a deficiency in the quantity, it had not the intended effect upon him, but only made him raving mad. His enemies thinking that he was incurable, allowed him a phyſician to viſit him. This gentleman, an intimate acquaintance of mine, ſkilful in his art, cured his patient, and, learning from him the ſubject of his impriſonment, procured him the means of applying to a higher tribunal than that of his unrelenting perſecutor. He did it, and was ordered to be ſet at liberty; but, how uncertain is our ſublunary happineſs! the very morning he was to be reſtored to his diſconſolate family, he was found dead in his bed.

I cannot better conclude the recital of my ſorrowful extracts, from a ſubject with which I could fill volumes, than by introducing to my readers a man of letters barbarouſly carried to an Abbey built upon a rock ſurrounded by the ſea, and there, in the middle of a vaſt dungeon inhabited by numberleſs rats, mice, and all the reptiles which take their abode in damp and unfrequented places, confined in a wooden cage, where, for two years, he lived upon bread and water. The beneficent and humane Engliſhman peruſing theſe pages, will undoubtedly think the crime of the unfortunate man to be of the blackeſt hue; and, indeed, it is the only idea that can enter the mind of a merciful be-

being; but this was not his caſe: the wretched victim of female influence, had only written a few lines, on the Marchioneſs whom I have already mentioned, in which he had with too much atticiſm, introduced ſuch an unwelcome truth, that it drew upon him the woeful effects of a never relenting revenge. But let us draw the curtain over thoſe horrors, and paſs on to leſs melancholy ſubjects, inſeparably connected with the foregoing ones.

My readers, after what I have ſaid, undoubtedly will allow that, of all the means the moſt refined deſpotiſm could contrive, none would have better anſwered the purpoſe of indulging an unbounded tyranny, than the *lettres de cachet*; and indeed, miniſters always at war with the people, could not uſe better weapons to attack them, in their laws, property, honour, liberty, and even their lives.

This, however, was but a part of the misfortunes in which we were overwhelmed. Others, though not of ſo great a magnitude, nevertheleſs, had ſuch an influence over the whole nation, that they would have contributed to render our ſituation irretrievably miſerable, if a prudent and timely reſolution had not put a ſtop to the reunited efforts made by the clergy, nobility, and gownmen, to render endleſs the ſlavery of our minds, and deprive us of our deareſt rights. I will then ſuccinctly mention thoſe abuſes,

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which, having crept among them, were the moſt acceſſory to our ſorrows; but my intention being far from that of giving any offence, the truth which leads my pen, obliges me to declare that I am thoroughly convinced that, among theſe three different claſſes of men, many were as worthy of that appellation, as they were uſeful and reſpectable members of the community: this ſaid, I proceed.

The body called the church, the moſt juſtly reſpected when its members ſtrictly keep to their inſtitutions, was, in France, diſtinguiſhed by the appellations of high clergy, inferior clergy, and monks.

The former, always choſen from among the nobility, and in the conſtant poſſeſſion of the higheſt dignities and preferments in the church, generally turned clergymen through family conveniences, and therefore had but little of thoſe clerical virtues, which ought to diſtinguiſh a ſpiritual leader. A man who, through idleneſs and libertiniſm, and without ſtudying his natural diſpoſitions, or the obligations honour impoſes upon a true ſoldier, becomes a warrior, very ſeldom proves worthy of the reſpect due to that name; but a churchman, in whom worldly ſentiments are ſubſtituted to the purity of morals, and ſanctity of manners, is, not only, a burden to himſelf and the community, but, the dangers ariſing from the bad ex-

examples he gives, are as deſtructive to the principles of the whole clergy, as they are the ſureſt underminers of every religious one, whatever they may be. This truth was, unfortunately, but too conſpicuouſly evinced by our church dignitaries. Moſtly as unmindful of the cares their high ſtation impoſed upon them, as they were little calculated for the taſk; too weak to avoid breaking the moſt ſacred and ſolemn vows; too wealthy to reſiſt temptations coinciding with their natural diſpoſitions, and too ambitious not to imbibe readily the true ſpirit of a court, where they almoſt always reſided, they, but ſeldom failed becoming the finiſhed imitators of the moſt conſummate courtiers, and members of the ariſtocratic party, which, by degrees, brought us on the brink of our ruin.

The generality of our inferior clergy preſented an aſſemblage of men indifferently taken from all conditions in life, whoſe chief and actuating motive of turning churchmen, was either a deſire of riſing above their native level, or that of acquiring preferments. A ſmattering of the Latin tongue, a ſanctified look, and a ſmall income, which, in England, would hardly find a man with bread and water, being the only requiſites required from the apoſtolical candidate; almoſt every ſingle man, when provided with theſe neceſſary qualifications, had

an unqueſtionable right to become a member of a body, which, through the means of idleneſs, ambition, or pride, had been made a compound of virtues and vices, bigotry and licentiouſneſs, and, too often, hypocriſy.

The third diviſion of our religious leaders conſiſted in the numberleſs inhabitants of thoſe diſgraceful remains of unenlightened and barbarous ages, known under the names of Frieries, and Nunneries. Theſe abodes of learning and ignorance, piety and profaneneſs, morality and libertiniſm, hope and deſpair, as prejudicial to public tranquility, as they hindered the progreſs of *legitimate* population, offered to the eye of impartial philoſophy, the moſt ſtriking example of the never failing effects of the power of craftineſs over weak minds.

Such was the degenerated condition of moſt of our godly monitors, and ſuch were the roots from which ſprung errors ſo deſtructive of the fruits juſtly expected from the indefatigable labours of the truly worthy part of that numerous body. Moſtly actuated by thoſe principles which had cauſed the degeneracy of the whole monarchy, the former had ſubſtituted prejudice to impartiality, narrowneſs of mind to liberality, pride to a conſtitutional humility, and the uncharitable want of toleration to the lenity, forgiveneſs and moderation ſo ſtrictly en-

enjoined by the Redeemer of mankind. But, I muſt here again make a ſhort digreſſion, which will throw a new light upon my ſubject.

It is as wide of my deſign, as it is out of my reach, to enter into any theological diſquiſitions on the tenets of the different claſſes of believers. I leave to every man his natural right of worſhipping the Almighty according to the dictates of his own conſcience; but, as I have examined the manners of the different ſects, I will venture to draw a parallel between the ſocial virtues of one of them, (almoſt unknown in France,) and thoſe of that body of men, whoſe duty is to take us through the thorny path which leads to an everlaſting happineſs.

The former, as ſteady promoters of good order, peace, and manners, as they are enemies to private and public diſſentions; enforcing by practice the ſpirit of meekneſs, patience and juſtice, they endeavour to promulge, keep their ſociety ſpotleſs, and free them from thoſe vices which ſo conſpicuouſly diſgrace humanity at large.

The latter, as unmindful of their obligations, as they prove attached to thoſe worldly concerns they ought to forget; often quarelling among themſelves, or ſowing diſcord among their brethren; adding oftener the alluring but dangerous example of irregularity, to the neglect of

thoſe virtues, which ought to be the inherent qualities of prieſthood, become by degrees, the chief deſtroyers of the principles they have ſolemnly promiſed to diffuſe and countenance.

The former, imbued with that Chriſtian charity, which knows no other bounds than thoſe ſet by humanity, reaſon and prudence, ſpread their natural and principled beneficence over objects of any belief or perſuaſion whatever. Perſuaded that every individual, either white or black, Chriſtian, Turk or Jew, who refrains from vice, and ſticks to ſocial virtues, is a uſeful member to ſociety, they are always ready to afford the unhappy that relief and conſolation which may prevent the committing of thoſe involuntary crimes to which deſpair too often leads.

The latter, ſeemingly convinced that the ſouls of the ninetieth part of mankind are in the way of eternal perdition, and taking the deſtructive madneſs of fanaticiſm, for the true ſpirit of an apoſtolical miſſion, never relent in their unmerciful perſecution of their fellowcreatures, whoſe only fault, if it be one, is to practiſe a doctrine different from theirs, and imbibed by their parents, in their infant underſtandings.

Under the reign of prejudice and ſuperſtition, the former received the ungenerouſly beſtowed nickname of Quakers; under that of true knowledge and *juſtice*, the latter were entitled divine;

I leave

I leave with my reader to pronounce which of the two contribute the moſt, by their practice of *ſocial virtues*, to a general happineſs, and I return to my ſubject.

The miniſtry and clergy were not the only leaders of the people, who had degenerated from their primitive inſtitutions. The body called *nobleſſe*, deviating alſo from the path traced by their truly noble anceſtors, had gradually become a hindrance to public happineſs. A too great number of them, ſhewing themſelves no longer the worthy repreſentatives of illuſtrious families, crowing over the peoples miſery, lived in a ſplendour above their means, and yet had ſubſtituted the moſt incoherent haughtineſs to that affability which is one of the characteriſtics of a true nobleneſs of ſoul.

They were divided into three claſſes, under the appellations of high nobility, or entitled nobles; petite nobleſſe, or nobly deſcended country-eſquires; and, *waxing* nobles *, or thoſe men who had been ennobled by buying certain offices created to ſupply by their produce, the wants occaſioned by the unpardonable profuſeneſs of bad adminiſtrations.

The high nobility, inhabitants of the court; courtiers by principles, as well as by right of birth,

* The word waxing is very old and obſolete, but its meaning correſponds ſo well with the idea I was willing to give of our new nobles, that I could not help making uſe of it.

birth, intriguers through their ambition, and always the conſtant ſatellites of the brighteſt ſtar, were by turn the ſupporters of unworthy miniſters, or enrolled themſelves under the banners of an oppoſite party, according as their unjuſt deſigns, or ſelf-intereſted views directed their ſteps. However, almoſt always ſure to find their advantage in the illegal proceedings of both, they never denied their ſupport to promote, either by their credit or influence, the ſucceſs of the odious acts of the uſurped power of the enemies to the people.

The *petite nobleſſe*, generally brought up in the country, as unpoliſhed as narrow-minded, were, like ſome of the offſprings of Iriſh kings, poor, proud, and infatuated with the ideas they had formed of their noble deſcent, and ſpent their uſeleſs days in decayed manſions, on which their vanity had beſtowed the names of caſtles.

There, guided by the empty notions of their own grandeur, and regulating their tyrannical behaviour by the degrees of the power they had acquired over their dependants, they never failed oppreſſing their tenants and vaſſals, and as much feared, as carefully avoided by their neighbours, were deſpiſed by every man of ſenſe and honor.

The third claſs, though not ſo numerous, can be divided into two. The firſt was compoſed of men whoſe ſucceſs in trade, or any other occupation in life, had made them entertain the

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extravagant idea of forſaking their right to the honourable rank of citizens, to ſet up gentlemen. The ſecond conſiſted in a ridiculous compound of true upſtarts, who, like the *Marquis* of *Jeannotiere*, ſo properly ridiculed by Voltaire, ready to burſt with pride, and therefore, willing, at any rate, to riſe above their origin, were weak enough to imagine, that they would, by the purchaſe of a vain title, waſh off the indelible ruſt of their meanneſs, ignorance, and native nullity.

The defects of our civil and criminal laws, and the vices in their adminiſtration, were evils of as great a magnitude as thoſe already mentioned. Both, obſcure, complicated, and contradictory; both, compounded of a multiplicity of parts as intricate as incoherent, were inexhauſtible ſources of injuſtice, which always rendered the ſucceſs of the moſt indiſputable claim as uncertain as the life of a wrongfully impeached individual, brought to the bar to receive his doom. The unguilty *Calas* broken on the wheel, and the three men whom the enlightened and unparalleled philanthropy of the Preſident *Dupaty*, lately reſcued from the dreadful puniſhment inflicted upon them by an unjuſt ſentence, corroborate too much what I have juſt ſaid, to dwell any longer upon it. I will then paſs on to a ſhort account of the cauſes productive of events which threw ſo great

a diſgrace on the legiſlators, and ſpread an indelible ſtain over the judges who paſſed judgement upon them.

The French deprived of the invaluable advantage of being tried by juries, had in lieu of them, parliaments, preſidials *, courts of aids †, and numberleſs juriſdictions poſſeſſed by Lords of manors. The offices of judges in theſe various courts of juſtice, were purchaſeable, and generally poſſeſſed by men of wealth rather than of true merit, who, unfortunately, having contracted a taint of the venality of their offices, and being moſtly young, inexperienced, and too often uninſtructed, were the more liable to commit thoſe errors, which to ſome were ſo prejudicial, and to others ſo fatal.

The purchaſe of theſe offices, was always eagerly ſought after, not only for the retributions iſſuing from their poſſeſſion, but for many other reaſons, among which I will only mention the two following.

The firſt was the indubitable, though often undeſerved right, they beſtowed upon the poſſeſſors, to command public reſpect, and aſſume ſelf-importance: the ſecond, the never conteſted one of becoming petty-tyrants over a people, whoſe juſt fear that an unforeſeen litigation might ſoon or late bring them under the op-

* A ſpecial court of judicature.

† The courts of aids were eſtabliſhed to hear cauſes relative to the impoſt.

oppreſſor's ferula, made them ſubſervient to their will, and was a too powerful and determinative incitement, to be withſtood by men, who ſeemed to have placed their glory in the practice of thoſe principles which were ſo detrimental to public happineſs.

Such was, Gentlemen, the hopeleſs ſtate of our country, and, thus a ſociety of twenty four millions of men, cruſhed under the weight of exceſſive and unequally aſſeſſed taxes, were labouring under the remains of a vexatious feudal ſyſtem, and, inceſſantly, expoſed to the dreadful effects of illegal and arbitrary orders. Thus the French, the wanton ſports of remorſeleſs miniſters; the prey of prejudice, ſuperſtition and ſervility, and forced to ſtifle their juſt complaints, had nothing left from the rights of men, but a too lively ſenſation of the exquiſite torments ariſing from the true ſentiment of their miſeries, when the Almighty's ineffable mercy ſent them a virtuous King.

This bleſſed event was ſoon followed by another. His Majeſty's paternal affection for his ſubjects, and his tender ſolicitude for their welfare, inſpired him with the noble and patriotic deſire of alleviating our long ſufferings, and remedying the numberleſs abuſes which had crept in all the departments of the adminiſtration. This could not be done without calling near his ſacred perſon men endowed

with

with the moſt conſummate abilities and confirmed uprightneſs, to afford him that aſſiſtance he was in need of, to ſurmount all the difficulties attending a deſign of ſuch a magnitude. It was done, and fortunately for us, Gentlemen, the ſame Providence who had produced in the heart of our beloved Monarch, a deſire ſo conducive to our happineſs, directed the nation in the nomination of their repreſentatives, and you became the objects of a judicious choice, which forms the happy æra of a regeneration as unforeſeen as it was unprecedented.

But, let me be permitted to proceed orderly, and place here a ſhort recapitulation of facts, which may have eſcaped the attention of my Engliſh readers.

The King's letter, of the 24th of January, 1789, for the convocation of the ſtates general at Verſailles, conveyed too ſtrong an idea of the diſtreſsful criſis at which the French government was arrived, not to imbibe into the minds of the moſt enlightened of his ſubjects, that of a more extenſive reform than what was likely intended by the adminiſtration. This ſpirit ſoon paſſed from the electors to the people, and became too conſpicuous in the extenſiveneſs of the powers you received from your conſtituents, Gentlemen, not to diſpleaſe thoſe who had the greateſt intereſt to ſtifle it at its birth.

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Miniſters ſaw with concern the riſing ſtorm. The alarm was ſounded from them to the whole ariſtocracy, but, theſe enemies to their King and Country, depending too much on the unbounded extent of their influence over the mind of their Maſter, thought themſelves ſafe, and able to diſpel eaſily the clouds with which, *an extravagant ſpirit of reform*, as they called it, had tried to obſcure their power. However, being not abſolutely free from inquietudes, and wiſhing to bring them to a ſpeedy end, not only they engaged his Majeſty to deprecate earneſtly that ſpirit, which had for its object his happineſs and ours, but, willing to perpetuate thoſe evils which would leave the ſtream of public treaſure at their diſpoſal, they left no ſtone unturned to prevent the union of the three orders, which alone could inſure the ſucceſs of a compleat reform.

The event did not anſwer their expectation: the memorable 17th of June, as glorious for one of our Princes of the blood *, as it was for the fifty truly noble men, and that half of the clergy †, who joined the *tiers-etat*, being productive of a decree, which conſtituted the members preſent, the repreſentatives of the people, under the denomination of *national aſſembly*, it gave ſuch a check to their ſecret practices, and per-

* The Duke of Orleans.

† The author hopes their names will be tranſmitted to poſterity.

perfidious intentions, that they, at laſt, thought they had nothing left to extricate themſelves, but to make uſe of the military, to frighten, or even deſtroy thoſe they found they could no longer make the objects of their depredations.

In conſequence of this odious determination, encampments were formed round Paris and Verſailles, and the freedom of deliberations ſeemed at an end. Every inhabitant of theſe two towns, trembling for the ſafety of the aſſembly, and ſtanding in awe, expected the reſult of ſuch forcible meaſures, when the undaunted friends to the people, though ſurrounded by the ſoldiery, and alarmed for their own exiſtence, made, on the 9th of July, the report of the committee of conſtitution. This maſter-piece of eloquent truth and wiſdom, which ſhews, at one view, the whole plan of the aſſembly's operations, was by them adopted in every article, and forms the baſis on which will, for ever, reſt the object of their patriotic deſires, the happineſs of the French.

Such an unexpected act of unſhaken firmneſs aſtoniſhed the junto. They, plainly, ſaw that the aſſembly would, likely, be ſupported by the whole nation; and, as they ſuſpected the Director-general of the Finances of conniving with the people, they accuſed him before the King, of having brought them into the puzzling dilemma, from which they were at a loſs how

to

to extricate themſelves. His diſmiſſion took place, and in a manner which could not fail affecting the acute feelings of the truly honeſt and reſpectable miniſter. But, this falſe ſtep, far from anſwering their purpoſes, was, on the contrary, productive of the moſt unexpected inſurrection in Paris. The enormous ſtructure called *Baſtile*, that den of ſorrows, horror and deſpair, was attacked and taken. Its infamous *Jailer*, a diſgrace to mankind, received a too honourable death from the hands of the brave citizens who beſieged and took him. The troops, ordered againſt the provoked people, generouſly laid down their arms, and, even, entered themſelves into the national guards. The camps were broken up; the ſoldiery retired; the heads of the ariſtocratic party fled; on the 15th of July, the King threw himſelf on the protection of the National Aſſembly; the worthy Necker was recalled, and, a total change in the adminiſtration concluded the ſcene.

From this period to the 4th of October, a calm, as ſerene as the ſituation of the kingdom could admit of, ſeemed to have ſucceeded the ſtorm. But, on that lamentable day, another, and the moſt unaccountable inſurrection taking place again, our dejected Monarch was forced to quit Verſailles, and remove to Paris, where, ſince that time, and in the midſt of his loyal ſub-

ſubjects; ſurrounded by his beſt friends and ours; acceſſible to thoſe who have made him the happy King of a *free people*, and perſuaded that the greateſt misfortunes for a Prince is to be a deſpot, he wiſhes for public tranquility, and enjoys the unfeigned proofs of the moſt general and deſerved reſpect, attachment and love.

But, this ſecond ſtorm, though of the moſt alarming kind in its beginning, ſoon ſubſiding, your indefatigable cares of the public proſperity, Gentlemen, were, in a ſhort time, productive of thoſe decrees *, which will, for ever, be the unqueſtionable proofs of the extent of your abilities, true nobleneſs of ſouls, and diſintereſted patriotiſm. Theſe immortal offſprings of your virtues, placed by the hands of philanthropy on the altar of liberty, will convey your revered memory to the moſt remote generation of free Frenchmen. The pooreſt *citizen* will delineate your ſacred names upon the

* 1ſt, The declaration of the rights of Man.—2dly, The principles of Monarchy.—3dly, The rights of the Nation.—4thly, The rights of the King.—5thly, The rights of citizens under the French government.—6thly, Organization and functions of the National Aſſembly.

The former, too long miſunderſtood by ſome, but abſolutely unknown to the major part of the people, and therefore eaſily invaded by their rulers, not only proves that man is born free, and as man commands reſpect, but, for ever fettering oppreſſion, it re-eſtabliſhes for all men their rights to liberty, property, and ſecurity, regenerates mankind, and reſtores the moſt perfect work of the Almighty to the full enjoyment of the bleſſings which his infinite goodneſs had beſtowed upon him.

the walls of his humble dwelling, and they will be the firſt words he will teach his growing family to pronounce. There, ſurrounded with them, they both will trace the origin of their happineſs to your exiſtence, and looking with horror towards the times which preceded it, their unbounded gratitude will put up their prayers to God for the welfare of your progeny. May the preſent generation, Gentlemen, they who are to reap the firſt fruits of your patriotic efforts, caſt their eyes upon thoſe times, and compare ages of ſufferings, with the tranſitory evils which are the natural concomitants of an unprecedented Revolution. It will renew their patience, and add to the ſlackened reſolution of the deceived, that firmneſs ſo much wanted to go through the few moments they are yet unavoidably to ſuffer. Let their judgment appreciate the happineſs which you are endeavouring to diffuſe among them. Let their reaſon point to them the ſtriking difference between their true friends and their deſigning enemies. Let them diſtinguiſh the artful inſinuations, and ſelf-intereſted motives of thoſe men, who are inſidiouſly trying to rivet their fetters, from the benevolent and unbiaſſed ſentiments of their faithful repreſentatives. Let them never forget that, from their hands, liberty received the civic crown which adorns her head, that, ſhe is now freely walking among

us,

us, and ſmiling upon every true citizen invites them to make themſelves worthy of her bleſſings. If, in ſpite of the conſtant labours of the ſaviours of their country, to complete the happineſs of the unenthralled Frenchmen, ſome unforeſeen events delay the completion of the moſt perfect work that ever adorned the annals of the world; let them remember what you have already done, Gentlemen, and it will warrant what you are to do. Let them recollect that, to your fatherly cares of their welfare, they are indebted for the recovery of their long loſt right of decreeing their own laws and taxes: that the Clergy and the Nobleſſe, who, in former aſſemblies of the States-general, ſlaves to Kings, and therefore unwilling to reſcue France from the hands of oppreſſion, inhumanly ſuffered their country to remain in the moſt humiliating ſtate of ſervility, are, now, united with the commons, to form with them the moſt reſpectable body of *patriotic citizens*. Let them throw an eye of impartiality on thoſe wiſe decrees which annihilate arbitrary orders, and the venality of offices in the magiſtracy, they will preſent to them the enchanting proſpect of public ſecurity. Let them examine into that ſpirit of juſtice and diſintereſtedneſs ſo conſpicuous in the whole of your conduct, may they be on their guard againſt the inſnaring eloquence of writers whoſe political ſtratagems,

and

gems, and elaborate ſophiſtry, calculated to the meridian of ariſtocracy, have for their aim the vindication of an imprudently hazarded opinion *. Let conſiderate people in France analize thoſe writings, and they will find them grounded on ſelf-love, puſillanimous fears, a too apparent jealouſy, and an avowed hatred for any innovation whatever. Before they read the letter I have juſt peruſed †, let them rejoice at their having outlived the times wherein our monarchy was exactly like that mentioned by Ariſtotle ‡, and which the author of the letter ſeems not to have recollected ſo well as this axiom of the ſame Ancient, ſaying that, "*the moſt arbitrary authority becomes lawful, if the ſubjects willingly maintain it* ‖." Let my compatriots receive as an unqueſtionable truth what Mr. Burke has ſo conſpicuouſly proved to be ſuch, viz. that, "*thoſe who are habitually employed in finding and diſplaying faults, are unqualified for the work of reformation* §." A juſt application of that new maxim will be for them a never failing antidote againſt the effects of the nefarious vapours iſſuing from all parts of a ſtupendous edifice

* Mr. Burke's pamphlet publiſhed laſt Spring.

† Mr. Burke's letter, in which, in the courſe of 356 pages, he never loſes ſight of his object, that of vilifying a nation who had candour enough to ſhew an unfeigned admiration for his ſuperior talents.

‡ Ariſtotle rhet. lib. v. cap. 8. p. 530.

‖ Ditto de rep. lib. iii. cap. 14. tom. 2. p. 357; lib. iv. c. 10. p. 374.

§ Mr. Burke's letter, p. 250, 251.

edifice erected by the hands of malevolent prepoſſeſſion. Let them read with caution the elegant, but captious product of a mind ſoured by diſappointments, deceived by partial informations, and elated by applauſes, juſtly deſerved when paſſion does not take the lead of reaſon.

In this letter, Gentlemen, the author diſplaying the true ſpirit of oppoſition, grounded on wit and ſarcaſm, treats with the bittereſt acrimony, the moſt capital points in the French Revolution, viz. the formation of the National Senate; the reformation in the church; the abrogating of titles; the abolition of parliaments, and the anarchiſm of the army. To vindicate properly theſe five objects of Mr. Burke's cenſure, would require more room than a ſmall pamphlet will allow me, but I beg leave to make a few remarks on the moſt ſtriking miſtakes dropt from a pen habitually held by prejudice, led by party-ſpirit.

The firſt thing that ſtruck Mr. Burke, in the calling of the States-general, was to find that the repreſentation of the third eſtate was equal in number to the repreſentatives of both the other orders *. The peruſal of the King's letter for the convocation, that of the report of the committee of conſtitution, and a mind diſpoſed to form a true idea of the real and beneficent intentions of our Monarch to remedy abuſes, could have put

* Mr. Burke's letter, p. 60, 61.

put a ſtop to a ſurpriſe, which undoubtedly, was the natural conſequence of a want of recollection, and an unwillingneſs to conſider things in their proper light. But his ſurpriſe is turned into wonder, when peruſing the liſt of the members of your Aſſembly, Gentlemen, he found that the major part of thoſe of the third eſtate *were practitioners in the law* *, *and the greateſt number of the repreſentatives of the church choſen from the inferior clergy, who,* (by a contrivance which is the growth of the vaſt fields of his own imagination,) *were ſent to the great and arduous work of new-modelling a ſtate* †. I dare aſſure Mr. Burke, that the reſpectable Men ſo illiberally treated by him, far from taking as an inſult the abuſe he ſo unmercifully beſtows upon them, will readily forgive and even pity him for his not knowing that the provincial advocates, whom he thinks ſo much out of their element, were to the diſtinguiſhed magiſtrates whoſe abſence he ſo kindly laments, what the compaſs is to a ſhip in a voyage round the world; that the mere country curates, as he ſo reſpectfully calls them ‡, have, either in divinity, law or politics, more of true knowledge than the generality of the high clergy, and that many among them are poſſeſſed of the ſame deep, general, and extenſive erudition, juſtly

* Mr. Burke's letter. p. 61. † Ditto, p. 67. ‡ Ditto.

juſtly granted to the Abbé *Morangis* *, and are all endowed with the hearts of Gentlemen, and men of honour †. However, *the moment Mr. Burke read the liſt he ſaw* DISTINCTLY, *and very nearly as it has happened, all that was to follow* ‡. It will not appear ſurpriſing, to thoſe who have the happineſs to be acquainted with him, to hear that his ſagacity enables him to judge, at any diſtance, of the abilities of men he never ſaw nor heard of, if he be but told what their profeſſions are; but, to maintain, as a well-grounded opinion, that *a provincial advocate* or *a country curate* are abſolutely diſqualified for making laws, and rule over the church, will, to the generality of the people, ſeem rather paradoxical ‖.

After a ſeries of reaſonings, dictated by the author's uſual moderation, and, pretty nearly, carrying the ſame conviction to the mind, he, like a true imitator of the illuſtrious Knight of *La Mancha*, flies to the attack of a conſtitution grounded on *the rights of Men. Theſe rights have, entirely, been miſunderſtood; they are more calculated to deſtroy liberty than to protect it: they have in practice the moſt dangerous conſequences for the repoſe of Europe*, and, in ſhort, *no government can look for ſecurity in the length of its continuance, or*

* Mr. Burke's letter, p. 215. † Do, p. 215. ‡ Do, p. 61.

‖ The European provincial advocates, and country curates, will, I hope, form a truer idea of their reſpective abilities, than Mr. Burke ſeems to be willing to give them.

or in the juſtice and lenity of its adminiſtration *. No, if it be founded on tyranny; if men under that government do not enjoy their natural rights to liberty, property, ſecurity, and reſiſtance to oppreſſion, as they do in England; if they are not bleſt with the beſt of conſtitutions, and the political liberty of doing whatever does not injure others, as Engliſhmen are, and Frenchmen will be. If, deviating from the true ſpirit of thoſe rights, government encroaches upon them to that degree which can make the people apprehenſive of the danger attending their ſituation. Do not your declarations of the rights of Men and Citizens, Gentlemen, dictated by the moſt enlightened philanthropy, and wiſeſt patriotiſm, breathe the very ſame pure and ſober ſpirit of liberty? are they not weighed in the ſcales of reaſon, humanity, and juſtice? do they not teach men to eſteem themſelves, to be juſt, and do they not for ever faſten the ſacred ties which ſocieties at large, are ſo apt to unlooſe? Now Mr. Burke will give me leave to aſk the world, if theſe are dangerous leſſons for men.

But, rejoins he, *the National Aſſembly has deſtroyed every thing.* This has been fully anſwered †. But, *they have performed in a few months the work of ages.* It muſt be granted, and it was of the moſt preſſing neceſſity. The author

* Mr. Burke's letter, p. 86.

† See the addreſs of the National Aſſembly to the people.

author of the letter ſeems to have forgotten that, in twenty places, he ſets down France as the ſeat of anarchy, and the field of general depredation, murder, &c. &c. If, unhappily this be the caſe, it appears to me, Gentlemen, that he cannot, but with an ill grace, blame proceedings which had for their immediate object the reſtoration of peace and good order, and to adminiſter the moſt ſpeedy remedies againſt thoſe evils which, he, ſo very kindly deſcribes.

Hiſtory will record, that on the morning of the 6th of October, &c. † the tranſactions of this lamentable day, which I have mentioned before, are as deeply engraved in the hearts of every member of the National Aſſembly in characters of the keeneſt ſenſibility and grief, as they are in thoſe of every Frenchman; but I will anſwer this charge, ſeemingly laid at the doors of the worthy leaders of the people, in Mr. Burke's own words; *the body of the community whenever it can come to act, can meet with no effectual reſiſtance* ‡. This proved but too true at Verſailles, where the rage of a guilty populace could not be ſtopt but by degrees; and, in a country where the beſt of laws are the beſt obeyed, the mildeſt of governments was forced to make uſe of the military, to operate what the laws could not effect §.

Having

† Mr. Burke's letter, p. 105, 106. ‡ Ditto, p. 92.
§ The late inſurrection in London.

Having thus friendly reproved a body of Gentlemen, whom every man who knew them would reſpect, Mr. Burke actuated by a true apoſtolical ſpirit, and armed cap-a-pé, enters the liſt, to maintain againſt all comers, that the ſacrilegious hands of a ſet of robbers †, Deiſts, and deſigning men, have wreſted from the French clergy their *impreſcriptible* rights to their own property. God forbid that the aſſertions of a Gentleman, juſtly reſpected for his eminent qualities, but as Man, fallible, and perhaps, too often unguarded againſt the impulſes of paſſion, ſhould be raſhly credited; and God forbid that my countrymen be thought to have ſo far forgotten that religion is the baſis of civil ſociety, as to become the followers of thoſe *atheiſtical fathers*, who, according to Mr. Burke, *wanted but the power*, &c. ‡ Theſe high ſounding words, artfully put together to ſow diffidence, and diſcord, among the French, and fill the minds of the clergy of Europe with terror, far from carrying with them the aimed at perſuaſion, are ſo abſolutely ſhort of the author's deſign, that they can, only, have their intended effect upon Men who, by their natural indolence, want of mental power, or blind credulity, are unable or unwilling to perceive the difference between a ſuppoſed and an unqueſtionable truth.

It

† Mr. Burke's letter, p. 206. 219. ‡ Ditto, p. 166.

It may, I think, with reaſon be ſuppoſed, Gentlemen, that Mr. Burke has not read your addreſs to the people of France *, or elſe he would have recollected that it breathes no other ſpirit but that of your veneration for the ſacred body of the French church. Has he ſeen in the public conduct of the National Aſſembly, relating to the new eſtabliſhment of the clergy, any thing that can produce in an unprejudiced mind, a well grounded idea *that your plan has been to bring the miniſters of the church into univerſal contempt, as preparatory to the utter abolition,* UNDER ANY OF ITS FORMS, *of the Chriſtian religion* †? This, indeed, is gall diluted in the waters of Tartar, but, happily, the unreaſonableneſs of the accuſation becomes the ſureſt deſtroyer of its dangerous effects, even upon weak minds.

It was, perhaps, proper to reform the clergy, but, to rob them of their property is ſacrilegious. Theſe are not expreſſions to be expected to drop from the pen of a Gentleman, who, very well knows, that only their ſuperfluities have been applied to the relief of the moſt preſſing wants of the ſtate. But, *they are to receive their miſerable allowance, &c.* ‖ Their allowance is not a miſerable one; IT WILL KEEP THEM AT AN EQUAL DISTANCE FROM THE EXTREME OF POVERTY, OR OF RICHES, AND CONSEQUENTLY A MODEL

* See that Addreſs, p. 14, 15. † Mr. Burke's letter, p. 218.
‖ Ditto, p. 182.

A MODEL FOR BOTH RICH AND POOR †, and all true Frenchmen will pledge their honour that it ſhall be regularly paid.

But, *it is the general ſpirit of atheiſtical fanaticiſm which has reduced theſe wretches to their intolerable diſtreſſes* ‡. I will not rake the hiſtories of former ages, nor ranſack the anecdotes of modern times, to aggravate the charges brought againſt the French clergy, and juſtify a reformation which was as much wanted, as it has been performed with different principles than thoſe attributed to the reformers; moreover, my reſpect for the clergy at large, will, always, induce me to draw the thickeſt veil over their failings, if they have no tendency towards the ſubverſion of manners and morals. But, I leave with the candid to determine if the moſt complete reformation is not abſolutely to take place, when thoſe frailties are ſo far degenerated into vices bordering upon crimes, as, not only to interfere with the public tranquility, and the ſacred repoſe of families, but to undermine, by degrees, all religious principles, and pave the way to their utter deſtruction. Now, it cannot be denied that the former was the actual caſe with the generality of the French churchmen *, and it is evident that the latter could not fail being the natural conſequences of the former.

Shall

† See the addreſs of the National Aſſembly to the people, p. 14, 15. ‡ Mr. Burke's letter, p. 225, 226.

* I beg of the reader to remember what I have ſaid, p. 32.

Shall I be permitted to aſk, if to prevent evils of ſuch a magnitude, is an act of ſuch a heinous nature as to be called ſacrilege?

The good qualities granted by Mr. Burke to the French nobility, prove that he is a juſt obſerver, but I differ from him when he ſays that *they contributed largely towards the taxation* †. They were too much privileged in that point, to do it in any proportion with the commons, but, *they paid the capitation* ‡. Yes, but a noble of ſix thouſand a year, paid no more than a commoner with an annual income of two hundred pounds.

As to their behaviour to the inferior claſſes, &c.‖ what I have ſaid, p. 37, will anſwer this, *to ſtrike any perſon, &c.*§ It is but too true that this was one of the favourite diverſions of ſome of the members of that order, but it was not by any means ſo hurtful to the community, as the petty tyranny reſulting from their being in poſſeſſion of thoſe vexatious feudal rights ſo wiſely aboliſhed.

Mr. Burke never tired of cenſuring, and determined, at any rate, to undervalue every thing that has been done in France, and, even, to reprimand an Aſſembly, of whom he, certainly, thinks better than he ſpeaks, cannot help diſapproving the abolition of Parliaments.

They compoſed permanent bodies politic, conſtituted to

† Mr. Burke's letter, p. 178. ‡ Ditto. ‖ Ditto, p. 202.
§ Ditto.

to reſiſt arbitrary innovation *. Yes, at the time thoſe old bodies of judicature were independent, and free from factions; but, ſince they had been ſo far incapacitated by deſpotiſm, as not to be permitted to addreſs the King, but after having regiſtered edicts which were never repealed, they could no longer, be conſidered as a barrier between property and the inroads of miniſters. Beſides, as I have ſaid before, the venality of their offices, the obſcurity and complexedneſs of the ancient laws, which made them the diſpenſers of an almoſt always precarious juſtice, had rendered their abrogation as neceſſary, as the formation of a new code †. But, *the diſmiſſed magiſtrates are to take their ſhare of martyrdom with the eccleſiaſtics, &c.* ‡ It muſt certainly be a natural ſtupidity which makes this paradoxical to me, but I cannot conceive that there can be any torment either of mind or body, in the kind act of being ſerviceable to ones country, or in that of giving up for the ſame purpoſe offices one could not fill with any degree of ſatisfaction to an upright conſcience. The former is unqueſtionably the caſe with our clergy, the latter with our magiſtrates, and, both faithful to the principles of the pureſt patriotiſm, far from murmuring, would even ſpill the laſt drop of their blood to maintain a conſtitution which, in depriving the one of wealth,

* Mr. Burke's letter, p. 298.
† See Blackſtone on Judgments by Jury.
‡ Mr. Burke's letter, p. 182.

wealth, and the other of power, has diffuſed among them liberty, peace, and morals. Can that be called a martyrdom?

The preſent conſtitution of the army has not eſcaped the attention of the *friendly* monitor of the French. *No more wiſdom*, ſays he kindly, *has been diſplayed in the formation, than in the plan of judicature* *. This is not difficult to anſwer: what the author of the letter is pleaſed to call want of wiſdom in both, ought (if it were, which is not the caſe), to be attributed to the defects in the old martial and civil laws, which for want of time have not, yet, been new modelled. But if Mr. B. had been poſſeſſed of impartiality and patience, he would not have taken the ſhadow for the ſubſtance; and had he waited for the publication of the new code, and new military eſtabliſhment, the former would have, at once, preſented to him laws which not only will maintain the wealthy in the certain enjoyment of his poſſeſſions, and ſhelter the poor againſt the oppreſſion of the rich, but, firmly, ſecure their reſpective rights to the moſt impartial juſtice. The latter, which is to appoint an army of *ſoldiers citizens*, and will, undoubtedly, be formed on the principle that a public force muſt be calculated to repel an enemy, but ought to be deprived of the means of oppreſſing or even alarming the people, would have perſuaded his reaſon, by ſhewing him clearly

* Mr. Burke's letter, p. 304.

clearly that nothing but time was wanted to put an end to all military insurrections, and re-establish good order in an army whose transient errors are rather to be attributed to the secret practices of an aristocratical cabal, than to a deviation from those refined sentiments of honour which are the characteristics of French soldiers.

However painful it be for me to see liberty degraded, and the labours, designs, and wisdom of the friends to mankind depreciated by a pen held by patriotism, and generally employed in the defence of the former, I am forced, by the limits I have prescribed to myself, to delay a little longer making all the necessary remarks on an attack which, though it be made with the whole artillery of an athletic genius, can only stun the *mind* without convincing the *heart*. May my countrymen look upon it in that light. May they, Gentlemen, supported by a well-grounded hope, peaceably wait till you have put the last hand to a structure which will convince your enemies of their errors. Let the people of France be as much convinced of it as I am. Let the natural generosity of freemen inspire them with a benevolent pity for those who, either deluded, or purposely wicked, cannot yet regulate the whole train of passions which assail them with an irresistible power. Let the former never lose sight of the fundamental principle of the French monarchy,

monarchy, which declares the perſon of the King inviolable and ſacred. Let them become truly ſenſible that the neareſt wiſhes to his heart are to make them happy. Let their noble deſire of imitating his and your virtues, Gentlemen, be their firſt ſtep towards perfection. Let patience, forgiveneſs, and juſtice, be the actuating motives of their actions, and their courage and conſtancy the devoted reward of your unanimous endeavours to complete their happineſs. May they, as well as your ſucceſſors, have engraved on their hearts the three ſacred words, *the* NATION, *the* LAW, and *the* KING. May they exhibit to the world the rare ſight of a King ſurrounded with twenty-four millions of true friends, and that of a Senate coaleſced with the miniſters and the people to operate the *real* good of the latter. May the genius of true philoſophy eraſe from Engliſh and French minds the remembrance of the dreadful effects of their too long contentions; and may a wiſe emulation, an enlightened benevolence, and a friendſhip grounded on reciprocal eſteem, prevail over that prepoſſeſſion and envy, too conſpicuous in the intercourſe between two nations ſo worthy one another.

A true Friend to LIBERTY.

Cambridge, Nov. 20, 1790.